

Correspondence

‘Children’s psychological well-being: a cornerstone for a healthier World’s future’

Dear editors,

The importance of children’s psychological well-being in shaping a healthier future for the world has come into focus in the current era of dynamic change. As Tellma concluded in his recent article entitled ‘Bleak horizons: global recession, parental unemployment and the erosion of children’s emotional stability’,¹ supporting children’s emotional well-being is not only a responsibility, but also an investment in the future. So, it is very important to study how the right strategy in realizing children’s psychological well-being. With the aim that they do not feel trapped in a complicated maze when faced with life problems in the future.

Various factors contribute to why children feel isolated and find it difficult to find their way out of the complicated maze they find themselves in. Traumatic experiences, instability in the family environment, physical, sexual or emotional abuse, lack of adequate attention, love or care from parents or caregivers,² excessive schoolwork, pressure to perform well, social problems at school, family history of mental disorders and excessive use of social media.³ These conditions can easily lead children into a pit of darkness whose impact is far more critical than it appears on the surface.

The short- and long-term impacts are frightening if these negative experiences are not addressed early on.⁴ Children will be vulnerable to mental health problems such as depression, anxiety disorders and post-traumatic stress disorder.⁵ They will develop difficulties in managing their emotions well.⁶ Negative experiences in childhood can affect the development of children’s social skills, making it difficult for them to form healthy relationships with others. They are also likely to experience behavioral disorders⁷ and substance abuse and even the risk of reoffending by young people in later life.⁸ So complex are the impacts that threaten children’s psychological well-being as well as their future that it is imperative that effective strategies are pursued to intervene. Because the future of a nation is seen in the quality of its next generation.

Parents and educators have a central role in providing emotional and social support that influences children’s development.⁹ Parents’ engagement in empathic parenting and educators shaping inclusive and caring educational environments

are key in helping children cope with stress, build self-esteem and develop interpersonal skills. Governments through their public policies can develop policies and laws that protect children’s rights and provide easy and affordable access to mental health services for children. Technology can act as a supportive tool in children’s emotional and social education, such as the use of telemedicine to reduce childhood depression.¹⁰ However, it is important to maintain a balance in the use of technology so that direct social interactions are not neglected. This challenge includes increasing children’s exposure to negative content and reducing direct social interactions. Solutions involve digital literacy education¹¹ for children and parents and the implementation of rules for wise use of technology.

It was concluded that emotional support and providing social skills to children should be considered holistically. This is impossible for all tasks to be assigned to parents alone, or schools alone. This will only happen if at least six elements that play a crucial role in seeking children’s psychological well-being can work together, namely parents, schools, government, society, mental health services and technology/media. Through strong cooperation, children’s psychological well-being can become a solid foundation for creating a healthier and more competitive future for the world. Furthermore, these insights can shape policies and practices to improve children’s psychological health.

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Setyorini Setyorini¹, Dwi Sri Rahayu², Sean Marta Efastri³, Hadi Pranoto⁴, Chaterina Yeni Susilaningih², Wenny Wijayanti², Zeti Novitasari⁵

¹Departement of Guidance and Counseling, Faculty of Training and Education, Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana, Salatiga, Indonesia

²Department of Guidance and Counseling, Faculty of Training and Education, Universitas Katolik Widya Mandala Surabaya-Kampus Kota Madiun, Madiun, Indonesia

³Departement of Guidance and Counseling, Faculty of Training and Education, Universitas Lancang Kuning, Riau, Indonesia

⁴Departement of Guidance and Counseling, Faculty of Training and Education, Universitas Muhammadiyah Metro, Lampung, Indonesia

⁵Department of Guidance and Counseling, Faculty of Training and Education, Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Sunan Giri, Bojonegoro, Indonesia

Address correspondence to Setyorini, Setyorini,
E-mail: setyorini@uksw.edu

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